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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KHARTOUM 000638

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SE GRATION, S/USSES, AF A/S CARSON, AF/C
NSC FOR MGAVIN AND CHUDSON
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SUBJECT: FM DENG ALOR TELLS SE GRATION THAT DARFUR REQUIRES
A MULTILATERAL SOLUTION

REF: NDJAMENA 162

Classified By: Charge D'Affaires Alberto M. Fernandez for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) SUMMARY: On May 7, FM Alor counseled Special Envoy Gration that the Darfur conflict can only be resolved within a broader international context, engaging Chad, Egypt, and Libya. The Special Envoy said that he sees an opportunity now to stop the fighting and begin a political process that will lead to a comprehensive peace deal for the region. He emphasized the need to seize the opportunity quickly, before it disappears. With an end to fighting and the start of political negotiations in Darfur, the international partners will be able to refocus their attention on implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between Khartoum and the SPLM and help the CPA parties prepare for post-2011 eventualities. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) Presidential Special Envoy Scott Gration met with Foreign Minister Deng Alor at the Foreign Ministry on May 7. SE Gration was accompanied by Deputy USSES Shortley, CDA Fernandez, and emboffs. SE Gration expressed frustration that agreement on the first phase of the Doha Darfur peace process was threatened by the failure of Sudan's Government of National Unity (GNU) to reach a compromise with the rebel Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) on a timeline for the release of prisoners, something on which they already had agreed in principle in the February goodwill agreement. He said that the GNU was concerned that released JEM prisoners could return to the fight, but he noted that's why we have a ceasefire.⁸ He lamented that the GNU was missing an opportunity both to make substantive progress and achieve a public diplomacy success. SE Gration said he had hoped to go from Khartoum to Doha for the signing ceremony on May 9 and the launch of Phase II of the Doha process. But unless the timeline issue is resolved immediately, he would have to return to the U.S. and report that the parties are not serious about achieving peace in Darfur.

13. (C) FM Alor urged the Special Envoy not to become discouraged and give up. He noted that his own Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) had talked on and off with the National Salvation Front/National Congress Party (NCP) from 1988 until 2002, when a ceasefire was achieved and negotiations to end Sudan's civil war finally began in earnest. Resolving the Darfur conflict also would require patience, Alor warned.

A Fleeting Opportunity

14. (C) SE Gration explained that he believed now is the time to seize a fleeting opportunity to make progress. He had met

with JEM leader Khalil Ibrahim in Ndjamena (reftel), where he urged Khalil to transform JEM from a military force into a political movement. The Special Envoy described JEM as &different from even two months ago.8 It has a presence in Darfur and now has support from other rebel groups, such as SLA/Unity. To complete Doha I and start Doha II, however, the GNU and JEM must agree on the prisoner release timeline immediately. The Special Envoy said an agreement should be possible, if there is the requisite political will. Instead of making peace and negotiating seriously, Khalil is saying &Khartoum is not serious,8 while Presidential advisor Ghazi Salahedin insists that &Khalil is not serious.8

Concluding Doha I, Launching Doha II

15. (C) SE Gration outlined his concept of a comprehensive process leading to a Darfur peace deal. As a good-will gesture, both sides would release ten percent of their prisoners, leading to a cease fire. While the GNU is calling for a ceasefire at the start of the process, he noted, Khalil wants to wait for a final agreement. Khalil told SE Gration that he (Khalil) would give up all his leverage if JEM agreed to lay down its arms now. Therefore, the SE is proposing a provisional &cessation of hostilities8 now, to stop the shooting, with a final "cease fire" as part of a comprehensive agreement at the end of the process. What is important is to end the killing now and start a process of political negotiations, he said.

16. (C) In Doha II, the Special Envoy continued, Darfur civil society must have a role by negotiating protocols resolving substantive grievances, such as power and wealth sharing.

KHARTOUM 00000638 002 OF 003

USSES Deputy Shortley noted that the U.S. also hopes to include the SPLM more prominently the Doha II process (the SPLM was present for the negotiation and signing of the Goodwill Agreement). The SE added that GNU First Vice President Salva Kiir had agreed to this when they met earlier in the day (septel). With the ceasefire and with the protocols, IDPs would be able to return home. Finally, the comprehensive ceasefire would be negotiated, allowing combatants on both sides to disarm and demobilize.

Reenergizing CPA Implementation

17. (C) The SE continued that, with a Doha peace process on track, it will be possible to refocus the international partners attention on the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). Darfur is an obstacle blocking the road to CPA implementation, he noted. He said that in Cairo, Foreign Minister Aboul Gheit was open to a high-level international conference on the CPA in Sharm el Sheikh, jointly sponsored by Egypt and Kenya. First VP Kiir also had been supportive. SE Gration described the CPA as the bolt that is preventing Sudan from flying apart. To keep the CPA on track, the international community must make the 2010 national elections credible. Looking toward the 2011 referendum on southern self-determination, the community needs to work to make north-south unity attractive, while simultaneously preparing for possible separation. It is imperative to start work now to find post-2011 solutions.

FM Alor: Darfur Requires an International Solution

18. (C) FM Alor replied that resolving the Darfur conflict will require a process larger than Doha can encompass. He noted that Chad accuses Sudan of supporting the rebels, who at that moment were advancing on Ndjamena. He wondered aloud whether this was connected to Khalil,s reluctance to enter into an immediate ceasefire. Regional neighbors) Egypt, Libya, Nigeria) view Sudan as expanding its power in the region, which they will not accept. It will be necessary to get their support to resolve Darfur.

19. (C) The Special Envoy agreed, saying he was very

disappointed by the rebel offensive one day after Sudan and Chad had signed a bilateral normalization agreement. Sudan is sending a message that its word means nothing, he said. President Deby claims he is losing control of JEM, which now is receiving support from other sources. JEM now is more interested in Darfur than in defending Ndjamena, Gration noted. FM Alor agreed that JEM has its own agenda independent of Chad, but noted that JEM receives all of its material and financial support directly from Chad and Libya. JEM has ties to political groups in Khartoum, i.e. Turabi's Popular Congress Party, as well as Ndjamena. Its agenda extends beyond Darfur, to regime change in Khartoum.

¶10. (C) The Foreign Minister repeated that the real problem is that the peace process has no real support from Sudan, neighbors, rather than issues such as prisoner release. Egypt and Libya must be engaged seriously. Why is Libya supporting the rebels (and especially JEM) in Darfur? What are its objectives? Unless outside support is halted, the rebel movements will be able to continue to fight indefinitely, as the Lord's Resistance Army has in Uganda and southern Sudan. SE Gration noted Egypt's skepticism of the Doha negotiations and said that in Cairo, FM Aboul Gheit had told him "The Nile does not run through Doha." He said he had asked Aboul Gheit to give the Doha process a chance and Aboul Gheit had agreed not to attempt any alternative processes until Doha plays out. By giving Egypt a role in the CPA process, the SE said, it will help prevent them acting as a spoiler in the Doha process. FM Alor noted Egypt's strong support for the CPA, out of its abiding concern about Sudan's stability.

¶11. (C) The Special Envoy agreed and said that his goal is to quickly start an inclusive peace process. JEM has now put together a coalition that does that, he said. The SE said that he understands that there is a larger context and a danger that JEM will become a bigger threat if it gains legitimacy. Therefore, it is important to get Khalil engaged before he becomes so strong that he does not care about a negotiated settlement.

¶12. (C) FM Alor said that the SPLM agrees that Khalil cannot be the only one representing the rebel side. The SPLM has

KHARTOUM 00000638 003 OF 003

invited SLA-faction leader Abdul Wahid to come to Juba to talk meet with Salva Kiir or for Salva to travel to the Netherlands to meet Abdul Wahid there, to try to bring him in. Including SLA-Abdul Wahid in the process is important, Alor stated. Although not a significant military force on the ground, Abdul Wahid is the only spokesman for the Fur people, the largest ethnic group in Darfur. Alor allowed that the process can start now, but it will be necessary to bring Abdul Wahid in later.

¶13. (C) SE Gration responded that it is important that we take advantage of the current situation, which is changing rapidly. To do so, we must stop the fighting in Darfur and Chad now, then immediately launch a political process to negotiate a permanent solution. A provisional cease fire now will put all of the parties on the spot and force them to engage in such a political process.

Comment

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¶14. (C) Based on his experiences in negotiating the CPA and dealing with the NCP, FM Alor is understandably skeptical that the fighting in Darfur can be ended quickly or easily. He correctly notes that for a successful conclusion, additional parties from both the rebel factions and Sudan's neighbors will need to be included. Moreover, he noted that while JEM is indeed powerful, it is entirely dependent on Chad and Libya, and ending the Chad-Sudan proxy war is essential to bring peace to Darfur. End comment.

¶15. (U) SE Gration reviewed this message before transmission.

